

REMARKS

The invention relates to a scrubbing method which may be employed in washing and drying a lens mold used for cast polymerization molding of plastic lenses. The invention also relates to a method of manufacturing plastic lenses by use of a lens mold.

In the present Amendment, claim 1 is amended to state that the elastic polishing member employed in the scrubbing method is a liquid-permeable sponge. Support for this aspect of the amendment may be found, for example, at page 22, lines 7-8 of the specification.

Further, claim 1 is amended to recite that the method includes a liquid discharge port which moves with the elastic polishing member and continuously supplies the liquid employed in the method to the upper side of the elastic polishing member during the washing step and self-washing step recited in the claim. Support for this aspect of the amendment may be found, for example, at page 22, line 19 to page 23, last line of the specification.

Claim 1 is also amended to simplify its language.

No new matter is added and entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 6-15 are pending, with claims 6-15 being withdrawn from consideration.

In Paragraph No. 3 of the Action, claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Regarding claim 1, the Examiner states that the phrase “in this condition” in lines 4 and 8 renders the claim indefinite because it is not clear what is meant by “this condition”.

As seen above, claim 1 has been amended to simplify its language and to delete the phrase “in this condition”.

Claim 1 as amended satisfies the definiteness requirement of § 112. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112, second paragraph, indefiniteness rejection of claims 1-3 are respectfully requested.

In Paragraph No. 7 of the Action, claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over JP 2001-353650 to Tabata et al and in view of EP 0764478 to Mackawa et al and in further view of JP S64-23224 to Murakami et al.

Applicants submit that this § 103 rejection should be withdrawn because Tabata, Mackawa and Murakami do not disclose or render obvious the scrubbing method of the present invention.

Mackawa does not disclose a hollow pressing unit. The Examiner will please refer to Fig. 6 of Mackawa. As stated at col. 8, lines 52-54, Fig. 6 of Mackawa “shows the positional relationship between the cleaning member 22 and the quartz plate 29 in the cleaning cup 24.” Mackawa discloses that the sponge layer of the cleaning member 22 is pressed against the quartz plate 29. In contrast to Mackawa, the deforming of the elastic polishing member by a rod-like or hollow cylindrical pressing unit is larger or greater than the deforming by a plate, and therefore it results in more effective self-washing. This is a distinction over Mackawa. Present claim 1 expressly calls for deforming the elastic polishing member by pressing the elastic polishing member against a rod-like or hollow cylindrical pressing unit so as to wash the elastic polishing member. See present claim 1.

Turning to Tabata, the balloon polishing member taught by Tabata is hard to self-wash, because a polishing member stuck or adhered to the polisher with a pressure-sensitive adhesive double-coated tape may break away from the polisher by deforming or deformation of the polisher. Applicants also question how the method taught by Tabata could be modified to

include a self-washing step as taught by Mackawa. The requisite motivation appears to be lacking. An elastic polishing member should be a liquid-permeable sponge.

Still further, in the present invention, a liquid discharge port which moves with the elastic polishing member continuously supplies the liquid to the upper side of the elastic polishing member throughout the washing step and the self-washing step. Since the elastic polishing member is made of a liquid-permeable sponge, the liquid supplied to the upper side of the elastic polishing member permeates the elastic polishing member, so effective washing and self-washing can be conducted by a simple (single) liquid discharge port. Tabata and Mackawa never disclose or suggest the liquid discharge port as recited in the present claims.

Murakami does not make up for the deficiencies of Tabata and Mackawa discussed above.

For these reasons, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the § 103 rejection of claims 1-3 based on Tabata et al JP '650 in view of Mackawa et al EP '478 and in further view of Murakami et al JP '224.

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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